

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

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Besieged!

Freshly showered, Rep. Satur Ocampo greeted visitors Thursday in a sleeveless undershirt, trousers and flip-flops after spending his 10th night at the House of Representatives.

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'Missing'

An ABS-CBN insider told me that "Panday Book 2" may no longer push through because lead stars Jericho Rosales and Heart Evangelista are usually "missing in action."

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Govt muzzling of press denied

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's spokesman on Thursday denied the government was muzzling the media and welcomed a legal petition from journalists against press censorship, more than a week after police raided a newspaper and deployed troops around two of the country's largest TV networks.

"The fact that they can go to court is a clear indication that democracy reigns in this country," press secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

In a petition Wednesday, nine journalists' groups and news organizations and about three dozen senior news people said the "threat of official intervention" through administrative sanctions or prosecution is as damaging to a free press as actual intervention.

During a one-week state of emergency Arroyo decreed to thwart a coup plot, police raided the Daily Tribune, a newspaper critical of Arroyo, but did not prevent its publication or control its content. The publisher and two columnists were, however, charged with inciting sedition.

In addition to surrounding the two TV networks with troops, national police chief Arturo Lomibao threatened to take over newspapers or

broadcast stations that do not follow government "standards."

The National Telecommunications Commission issued reminders of prohibitions on broadcasting "rebellious, terrorist propaganda" and statements that "propose or incite treason, rebellion or sedition."

The networks say they did not bow to pressure to stop coverage of the unfolding coup plot, despite the presence of troops.

The court petitioners said the "dangers of unreviewable administrative actions imposing prior restraints on the press are as ancient as dictators."

They requested that the court order the government not to impose censorship or prior restraint on the media, declare the telecommunications regulations unconstitutional and stop the police from threatening to take control of news organizations.

Bunye said the government's moves against the media stood "on solid operational and legal grounds" and called a "responsible media a force for freedom and a partner in reform."

During a Senate hearing Thursday, a TV net-

GOVT Page 2

In this photo released by the Malacanang palace, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, left, greets Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto during his 69th birthday at the Mother of Good Counsel Seminary Chapel in San Fernando town, Pampanga province, northern Philippines on Thursday, March 9, 2006. Arroyo withdrew her declaration of a state of national emergency last week, expressing confidence that order had been restored.

CHUCK SAYON

Proud of his

By MARCONI CALINDAS
REPORTER

With his almond eyes and dark skin, not even his classmates in elementary school in Bethesda, Maryland, thought that he was of Philippine descent.

Born to Filipino parents from Bohol, the Philippines, Charles Sayon Jr., fondly called Chuck by his peers and colleagues, has always looked back to his roots—an Asian and a Filipino by heart. Chuck said he could never for-

get his experience when he was still a child and he had to go to a public school in Maryland.

"I was the first non-white American student in the school," Chuck recalled.

Chuck, turning 50 this May, said being of a different color meant a lot at that time, especially in a state where most of the population was composed of Caucasians. He said he and his only sibling had to struggle against discrimination—at least dur-

ing that time. He said most Filipinos in that era were flocking to urban states and cities where there were mixed races, but his family opted to stay in Maryland because his parents' relatives were also there.

Chuck's parents, Charles Sr. and Magdalena, chose to live in the United States for a brighter future for their family. His dad, now deceased, was in the Navy for 23 years that began when the Philippines was still a Commonwealth of the U.S. He said his father had to travel in and out of the Philippines during that time to fulfill a promising career in the Navy.

The first 10 years of Chuck's life was spent in Maryland, then his family

PROUD Page 2



PINOYNEWS

MDX AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Maintaining high frequency on Saipan

By MARCONI CALINDAS
REPORTER

In times of crises or disasters in the CNMI, one of the local organizations that is at the forefront of assistance efforts is the MDX Amateur Radio Club, which has been serving the CNMI community for the last 12 years now.

Vice president Ramon S. Awit said the group was a spin off of the former MDX Radio Group on Saipan that was formed in 1994 with CB radio operators at that time.

In 1999, with the intention to unite all members of the MDX Radio Group, the MDX Amateur Radio Club was established. Awit said the group was formalized on May 5, 2000.

Awit said the goal and objective of the group is to popularize ham radio operation by developing the knowledge and skills of its members. He said the group's original members were radio users in the CNMI who were licensed by the Federal Communication Commission.

MDX Amateur Radio Club is a non-profit organization that

also aims to give assistance to the community in times of need using radio communications.

Awit said that community service is at the forefront of the mission of the group, especially in times of natural calamity or a disaster. He said the club would always collaborate with other organizations such as the American Red Cross to coordinate assistance through manpower and communication.

Awit said the group has been participating in several community activities such as the yearly tree planting, the Trash-A-Thon,

American Red Cross-NMI Chapter activities and projects, Marianas Visitors Authority projects such as the Tagaman and Xterra, and the celebration of the Holy Week in the CNMI where the group gives out free drinks to pilgrims going up Mt. Tapochao.

The group, composed of locals, Filipinos and Americans, recently finished a project in collaboration with the Emon Lodge No. 179 group. Both groups spearheaded the repainting and renovation of the Gilbert Ada Gym parking lot in Oleai. MDX also participates in

an annual basketball league in the Commonwealth.

Due to its commitment to the community the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter has recognized the group's effort in helping the community. MDX currently has a partnership with Hawaii-based Hawaii Radio Service group.

Current officers are: president Wilfredo Ching, vice president Awit, secretary Jun Sison, treasurer Vic Brana, auditor Jay Dioco, public relations Arnel Diesta and Leo Canedo, and repeater WH0ABP trustee Raul Abordonado.

Board of directors is composed of chair Caesar Villaluz and board members Bong Malasarte, Wilfredo Ching, Raul Abordonado, Romy Sison, Ramon Awit, Ed Reyes, Melencio Guevarra, and Vic Brana.

Individuals that are interested in joining the group can contact Awit at 287-9417 or contact Bong Malasarte at 287-4395.

The group has also been assisting community members in obtaining their FCC license here in the CNMI. Interested parties may contact Awit and Malasarte for further details.

PROUD FROM PAGE 1

moved to San Francisco. Chuck said being in the Bay Area made him realize that, despite being different, life is beautiful and could be harmonious. He said he found a home in California because this is where he saw other people of different colors mixing and mingling without a care in the world.

"California is more cosmopolitan," said Chuck, adding that he flourished in his new surround-

ings. "It was enjoyable to be in a more diverse neighborhood."

Making it in college

Chuck said he started working when he was younger. He said he had to eke out a living to make it to college. He had to work as a gas station attendant, lifeguard, bus boy, and newspaper boy, among others.

He said gone are the days when young people had to toil and sweat just to earn a living. He said that during his time, "I really had to work my way

through college."

Chuck always wanted to be a forestry specialist but back then the profession did not show any potential in terms of monetary rewards, so he chose to major in geology. He said during that time, geology seemed more lucrative than forestry. Chuck graduated from the University of California, Hayward, with a degree in geology.

Humble beginnings

His first professional job was

as a park maintenance aide for the California State Parks in San Francisco. He said his job then included construction of fences, repair of buildings and structures and clearing of trails and roads. Then he became a sales coordinator for a retail dealership company in San Leandro where he coordinated the sales activities of the company.

Chuck then joined the U.S. Peace Corps as a volunteer in Micronesia. He said he was appointed to the Pohnpei State Economic and Development

Authority, Marine Divisions in Eastern Micronesia for the first two years with the corps. Then the corps had to transfer him to Seattle to work with the Peace Corps recruiting office. While there, he had to assist in organizing and conducting information campaigns for prospective volunteers at universities and communities.

From 1992 to 1996, Chuck worked as Natural Resources Management specialist, working for the National Park Service's Western Regional Office, Division of Natural Resources and Research in San Francisco. Some of his responsibilities included: overseeing the natural resources management in over 50 NPS park units in Arizona, Nevada, California, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

In 1996, Chuck was given the opportunity to work in the CNMI as the park's site manager to oversee the development and maintenance of the beautiful, American Memorial Park.

"I [came] to Saipan to go back to the island style of living," Chuck said.

Initially, he planned to work on the island for at least three to five years but Chuck said he had begun to enjoy the island and his 10-year tenure with the island only proved that he has fallen in love with Saipan.

"I guess I've been captured by Saipan," he grinned.

Celebrating his 10th year on Saipan this May 14, he is now

planning whether to have a huge celebration since this year also marks his 50th birthday on Nov. 7.

'Pinoy' by heart and taste

Chuck still considers himself a Filipino, especially when he shows his flair in preparing Filipino dishes. He said he makes the best "adobong baboy" but could prepare other Filipino dishes for his friends and family.

"My dad inspired me to cook," he said, adding that his dad used to be a steward in the Navy.

He believes the Philippines produces the best cooks in the world. He said this was proven when a Filipina was appointed last year to be the executive chef in the White House. "Filipinos excel in this industry."

Chuck admits he loves traveling. Among the places he has gone to are Tahiti, Micronesia, New Caledonia, Australia, Borneo, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong. He said he also makes it a point to travel to the Philippines three to four times a year. He said he just loves to shop in Manila where he could also see relatives and some friends.

Chuck said one thing that he always admires in his fellow Filipinos is the "strong sense of community of the Filipino people." He added that this is one trait that others would never surpass anywhere in the world.

commander from his post on suspicion of involvement in the foiled coup plot.

Maria Ressa, head of the news division of ABS-CBN television, said a high-ranking government official called a company executive to stop coverage of unrest in a marine camp on Feb. 26, two days after Arroyo issued her emergency decree. The state of emergency ended last Friday.

Lt. Col. Ariel Querubin sparked a standoff at marine headquarters when he protested a decision to remove the marine

She said the network refused, partly because it would have created more public panic.



INTRODUCES

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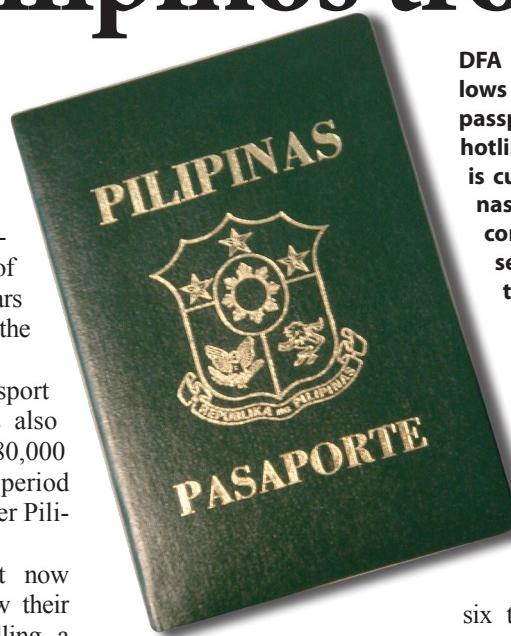
1M Filipinos troop to DFA call center service

By ERWIN OLIVA
INQUIRER

More than a million Filipinos wanting to renew their passports have used the call center service of the Department of Foreign Affairs five years after it was launched, the agency said.

Dubbed DFA Passport Direct, the service has also processed about 380,000 passports during that period through local firm partner Pilipinas Teleserv Inc.

DFA Passport Direct now allows Filipino to renew their passport by simply calling a hotline 737-1000. The hotline is currently run by the Pilipinas Teleserv Inc. the same company behind e-Census service of the National Statistics Office.



National Statistics Office.

The DFA Passport Direct service allows passport holders

DFA Passport Direct now allows Filipino to renew their passport by simply calling a hotline 737-1000. The hotline is currently run by the Pilipinas Teleserv Inc. the same company behind e-Census service of the National Statistics Office.

POEA reminds of minimum requirement for contracts

The Philippine Overseas Employment Agency is reminding overseas Filipino workers and its employers all over the world, especially in the CNMI, about the minimum contract requirements in their host country of work.

Based on the recently released publication from the agency, Hiring Filipino Workers, Employer's guide, which was provided through the Philippine Overseas Labor Office, when hiring Filipino workers

the guaranteed wages for regular working hours and overtime pay for the OFWs should not be lower than the prescribed minimum wage in the host country.

It should not be lower than the appropriate minimum wage standards set forth in a bilateral agreement or international convention, if applicable, or not lower than the minimum wage in the country, whichever is the highest.

There should also be a free transportation to and from the worksite or offsetting benefit,

according to POEA.

There should also be free food and accommodation or offsetting benefit too. "Just or authorized causes for termination of contract or of the service of the worker, taking into consideration the customs, traditions, mores, practices, company policies, and the labor laws and social legislations of the host country."

Provisions of the contract, however, may also be considered through the existing labor and social laws of the country, said the publication. Relevant agreements, conventions, legislations or resolutions and relevant bilateral and multi-lateral agreements or arrangements with the host country may also be considered.

The employer's guide brochure can be obtained from the POLO office in Nauru Building in Susupe. (*Marconi Calindas*)

LABOR FRONT

Attendance at meetings: Paid or unpaid?

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
REPORTER

Q: Does a non-English speaking worker need to hire a translator or pay a fee to obtain a temporary work authorization?

A: No. If a worker needs help in filing a complaint, he or she should advise A Labor staff. A translator will be provided free of charge. Labor does not charge a fee for a TWA. There is a \$20 fee for filing a complaint, but this can be waived for indigent persons. A guest worker may also contact the Federal Ombudsman for assistance in filing a complaint.

Q: If a worker has not been paid his or her full work hours, what is the first proper step to do?

A: The worker should immediately report it to the employer. If the employee is not satisfied with the results of his/her discussion with the employer, he or she may contact the Division of Labor. The law says that workers are entitled to be paid every two weeks. When the employees are paid, the employers are required to provide them a receipt which shows the total hours worked, total gross compensation, the amount and purpose of each deduction, total net compensation, date of payment and pay period covered.

Q: Does a worker get paid for attending a meeting in the office?

A: Workers who are required to attend work-related meetings or to be on the job site must be paid for that time.

Submit questions on labor issues to *Saipan Tribune* via e-mail at editor@saipantribune.com, or by calling 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747 and leaving a message at Ext. 133. You may also submit questions in person by writing it down and dropping it off at the *Saipan Tribune*'s office on the second floor of the Century Insurance Building on Beach Road, Garapan.

to call in request for renewal. All requirements, including old passports, are then picked up from the client's address, then the service processes the application and within six to eight working days, a new passport, together with the old one, is delivered right to the client's doorstep.

The service is available 24 hours a day.

"DFA Passport Direct is fully aimed at improving the citizen service experience," said Pilipinas Teleserv director for marketing and quality assurance, Raffy David.

David said that the service is attracting more users, with usage growing at an average of more than 10 percent annually. Pilipinas Teleserv has, for instance, more than 20 call center agents handling nearly 1,000 calls per day.

Jun Yupiter, Pilipinas Tele-

serv director for operation, said that it was helping DFA launch more tele- and web-based services.

Yupiter disclosed that the company is planning to provide front-end crowd management service to the DFA.

Department of Foreign Affairs acting assistant secretary Domingo Lucenario said that the agency was also tapping Pilipinas Teleserv to help in its information dissemination campaign versus illegal passport

applications and assistance in authentication services.

Pilipinas Teleserv is a Filipino call center service company established in 2000 by Yupiter, David, and Jeffrey Villanueva.

The company is a service partner of the DFA and other agencies including the National Statistics Office for its NSO Helpline Plus Hotline 737-1111, and the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency's Balik-Manggagawa Express Clearance Hotline 737-7777.

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Besieged lawmakers: PBB in real life

By HRVOJE HRANSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Freshly showered, Rep. Satur Ocampo greeted visitors Thursday in a sleeveless undershirt, trousers and flip-flops after spending his 10th night at the House of Representatives.

He isn't sure if he'll be going home or to jail when he leaves, the same questionable fate that faces four other left-wing representatives accused of plotting to overthrow President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Last week, amid a string of warrantless arrests following Arroyo's proclamation of a state of emergency, Ocampo and his colleagues—Teodoro Casino and Joel Virador of the Bayan Muna party, Liza Maza of the women's group Gabriela and Rafael Mariano of the Anakpawis party—sought the protection of House Speaker Jose de Venecia.

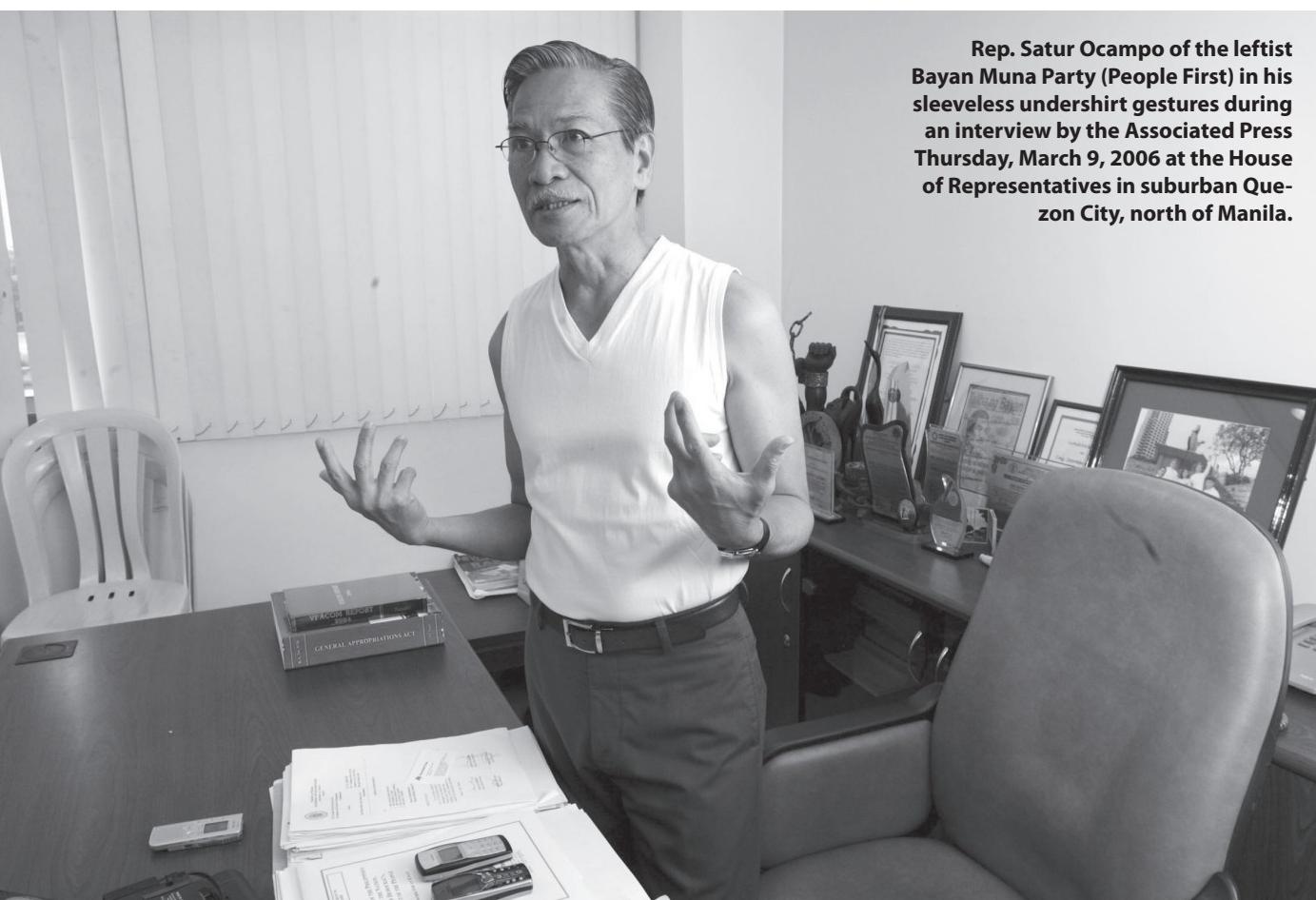
Another left-wing lawmaker, Rep. Crispin Beltran, wasn't so lucky. He was picked up before he could get to the House and is facing the capital charge of rebellion.

Although Arroyo lifted the emergency decree last Friday after a week, saying the coup plot has largely been contained, the lawmakers remain in limbo. Adamant they will resist a warrantless arrest and denying the accusations against them, they are scheduled to appear at a preliminary hearing next Monday.

They say they have assurances they will not be arrested on the way.

In the meantime, spacious conference rooms, long corridors, bathroom showers and a ground-floor galley have become their living quarters in another twist to the latest political drama besetting the Philippines.

"Initially, the speaker offered to have us billeted at a hotel of one of the congressmen. But we thought it would be unseemly," Ocampo told The Associated Press. "Then he offered us the facilities of his office, because there is sufficient space for us to sleep. We have members of our families come in, our lawyers,



Rep. Satur Ocampo of the leftist Bayan Muna Party (People First) in his sleeveless undershirt gestures during an interview by the Associated Press Thursday, March 9, 2006 at the House of Representatives in suburban Quezon City, north of Manila.

RP assures diplomats threats have subsided, warrantless arrests legal

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine officials assured diplomats Thursday that security threats have subsided in the wake of a foiled coup plot and that the government's actions during a state of emergency were legal.

The closed-door briefing to the diplomatic

corps by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz came in the wake of criticism of perceived government curtailment of civil rights and media freedom.

"It's good for us to state the basis of (Proclamation) 1017 and that there was

clear and present danger," Romulo told a news conference, referring to Arroyo's state of emergency decree that she imposed Feb. 24 and listed a week later.

He said the diplomats were satisfied with the briefing, and many did not raise questions.

we prepare our sleeping mats and we work from our offices.

"In a sense, it's lonely," he admits.

Still, the "Batasan Five"—the group's nickname using the Tagalog word for congress—managed to throw a party last week when Virador celebrated his 39th birthday. Authorities didn't allow non-relatives to attend, but the lawmakers managed to smuggle some food through the iron-barred fence, Ocampo said.

"That's where we felt there is a restraint on our movement, on our access to our friends," he said. Not everyone is happy with their presence.

De Venecia, an Arroyo ally,

complained to reporters that he was growing tired of looking after his five "housemates," comparing it to "Pinoy Big Brother," the hugely popular Filipino version of the reality TV show, with contestants confined in a house for 100 days under constant camera surveillance.

"I am having difficulty doing the role of 'Pinoy Big Brother.' I am already tired," he said. "They live here, and we provide them breakfast, lunch, dinner and security. When it's time to arrest them, we have to show that no lawmaker is above the law."

Arroyo's executive secretary, Eduardo Ermita, said even the House leadership would have no choice but to turn over the five lawmakers once

arrest warrants are served. He stressed that authorities would act within the bounds of law and would not trample on civil liberties in quelling attempts against the government.

For Ocampo, a former communist guerrilla who traded his gun for a seat in Congress, the case is political and ideological.

"Our rights are only reflective of the rights of our citizens. They are now violating our rights, which means that if we, as elected representatives of the people, allow them to do this and don't resist and oppose, then we are saying they can do it to ordinary citizens," he said. "That's the high principle."

"In a larger picture, we see what they are doing to

us as part of the long-drawn campaign of the government to deny the left to enter the political arena," he said.

The military frequently refers to Bayan Muna and associated groups as a front for the 36-year-old communist rebellion, and Ocampo served in prison for almost 10 years under late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"There is a high degree of intolerance of those in power, the dominant economic and political elite and political parties," he said. "They extend one hand of invitation, and punch you in the face with the other. ... If this government does not change, it will be very difficult for the left to make much more headway in the political arena."

Left-wing activist shot dead in RP, day after Amnesty raises alarm over kill-

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle fatally shot a provincial left-wing leader in his car, activists and police said Friday, a day after Amnesty International expressed alarm over extrajudicial killings in the country.

Santiago Teodoro, head of the Bayan Muna party in Malolos town, north of Manila, was driving with his wife late Thursday when two motorcycle-riding men pulled next to their car and fired shots, hitting Teodoro in the neck, his wife Lucila told Manila radio station DZRH.

"I heard a pop, and I thought it was just glass breaking. Suddenly I noticed a motorbike beside us, and I looked in my husband's direction and saw his body already limp," she said.

Police confirmed the killing, but it wasn't immediately clear if there were any suspects.

Bayan Muna said more than 80 of its members have been slain by police and the military since 2001. Authorities, frequently referring to the party as a front for a 36-year-old communist insurgency, deny the charge but most of

the killings remain unsolved.

London-based Amnesty International said Thursday that comments by senior government officials linking left-wing political parties, particularly the left-wing Bayan Muna, increased during the year," the 2005 report said, adding that more than 40 activists, half of them party members, were gunned down.

"Amnesty International continues to be gravely concerned at reports of an ongoing pattern of political killings of members of legal left-wing organizations in various provinces nationwide," the human rights group said in a statement.

It urged the government to conduct

prompt, thorough and impartial investigations of all the killings.

The U.S. State Department also highlighted the killings in its annual human rights report, posted on the U.S. Embassy Web site.

"Killings of community activists, church workers, lawyers, and members of left-wing political parties, particularly the left-wing Bayan Muna, increased during the year," the 2005 report said, adding that more than 40 activists, half of them party members, were gunned down.

The State Department concluded "the government generally respected the human rights of its citizens," but noted that "pervasive weakness in the rule of law, official impunity, and the wide disparity between rich and poor contributed to cynicism about official justice."

Govt to appeal court ruling returning firms to Lucio Tan

The government is to appeal against a court ruling returning control of four companies it sequestered almost 20 years ago to tycoon Lucio Tan, officials said.

A special anti-graft court, the Sandiganbayan, late Wednesday lifted the government's sequestration order on Allied Banking Corp., Fortune Tobacco Corp., Foremost Farms and Shareholdings Inc., allowing Tan to resume full control of the firms.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), a government agency, sequestered the companies in 1986 on suspicion that they were illegally acquired through Tan's association with President Ferdinand Marcos.

Marcos was deposed in a popular revolt in February 1986 and the PCGG was created to hunt down the estimated 10 billion dollars that Marcos and his allies allegedly stole.

PCGG chairman Camilo Sabin said that his agency would appeal the decision of the anti-graft court.

He said the PCGG had yet to receive a copy of the decision, which stated that the agency had failed to prove the seizure and control of the companies had a legal basis.

"We will elevate this to the Supreme Court as this is the final arbiter," said PCGG commissioner Narciso Nario.

Ferry catches fire, ship owner says all passengers are safe

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A ferry carrying close to 800 passengers and crew caught fire Thursday while sailing in the central Philippines, but no injuries were immediately reported, a spokesman for the ship's owner said.

The fire broke out shortly before noon in the first-class section of Superferry 12, said John Rojo, an assistant vice president of Aboitiz Transport System Corp.

The ferry was going to Cebu city from Manila with 639 passengers and 145 crew members.

"It's now under control. All of them are safe and secure already," Rojo said, giving no other details on the vessel's condition or on how the fire started.

A Philippine navy rescue vessel headed for the ferry, which was anchored off the northern tip of Cebu island, about 500 kilometers (310 miles) southeast of Manila, said Capt. Robert Estioko, commander of naval forces in the Cebu area.

The Philippine air force also flew rescue personnel to the ferry by helicopter, said air force spokesman Lt. Col. Resituto Padilla.

Another housemate leaves PBB happily

By NINI VALERA
INQUIRER

When the Philippines voted and turned in only 13.5 percent of the total votes for "Pinoy Big Brother" celebrity housemate Christian Vasquez, the country was actually rooting for him.

This was how the model/actor from Bacolod saw his eviction from Big Brother's house last weekend, after 29 days—the second housemate to get the boot.

When his nomination was announced a week before the eviction, Christian had asked viewers of the ABS-CBN reality show to decide whether he should stay or leave the house to be with his sons, Ryan and Martin.

At the Indies, where film 'Cavite' won

By RUBEN V. NEPALES
INQUIRER

LOS ANGELES—Actress Lili Taylor's mispronunciation of "Cavite" when its Filipino-American filmmakers Ian Gamazon and Neill Dela Llana won a prize Saturday last week at the Independent Spirit Awards reflected the easygoing vibe at these indie Oscars.

Lili, who presented—with Willem Dafoe—the IFC/Acura Someone to Watch Award with a \$25,000 unrestricted grant to RP-born Ian and Neill, pronounced it as "Ca-veet."

In other awards shows, presenters are thoroughly rehearsed so they will pronounce names and titles correctly. Things are done differently at the Indies; by its very name, it is the opposite of the Oscars, which tends to take itself too seriously.

Just going to this event, traditionally held on the eve of the Oscars, felt different. I drove to Santa Monica, where I was supposed to take a shuttle to the venue, a tent set up right on the beach. But at the appointed terminal, a volunteer advised me to walk, as the shuttle had been delayed.

I smiled at the chance to stroll close to the Pacific Ocean on a glorious California afternoon, to an awards show, in my jeans and Rockports. The sky was a perfect blue. People on rollerblades and bikes glided by.

In minutes, the white tent came into view. A small crowd of tourists and pedestrians had gathered to watch the arriving stars. At the Oscars, you couldn't approach the vicinity of the Kodak Theatre without a badge. Just try.

I watched the scene with the onlookers before checking in at the press booth. Most stars drove themselves (gasp!); a few arrived in limos. George Clooney got the loudest cheers. He immediately walked over to the fans, signed autographs and posed for snapshots.

"I guess the public wanted me to be reunited with my boys," Christian, 29, told Inquirer Entertainment on Monday during his exit interview.

The actor is a single father; his wife left several years ago. The boys live with his parents in Bacolod, while he is based in Manila, pursuing his show biz career.

"I had never missed my sons as much as when I was inside the [PBB] house," Christian admitted. "I usually see them only five times a year—Christmas, New Year, and birthdays. I should see them more often."

Ecstatic

The most important thing he learned from his stay, Christian said, was that "I took my freedom for granted when I should have used it to be a better

father to my sons."

Dubbed Hunk Daddy in the show, Christian was ecstatic when he left.

"I felt that, among the three of us who were nominated—Rico Robles and Rustom Padilla were the other two—they deserved to stay inside."

Another person who was delighted that Christian is out at last was his manager, Biboy Arboleda.

"I prayed for that," Arboleda confided to Inquirer Entertainment. "It was a very tense time for me just watching the events inside the house."

Biboy was referring to a period last week when Robin Padilla stormed into the house and confronted Christian who, he thought, had been taunting his brother, Rustom. Prior to that, Rus-

tom had admitted to Keanna Reeves before millions of viewers that he was an abused child and that he was gay.

Annoyed

"At first I did not understand what Robin was saying," Christian said. "But when I told him that I admired his brother very much because of his courage, he (Robin) understood."

After viewing unedited footages of the 24/7 action inside the house, Robin discovered that the scene he had been annoyed about—Christian in boxer shorts, aping a macho dancer—happened before Rustom's coming out.

Biboy wondered: "If he weren't Robin, would they have shown him the tapes?"

Echo and Heart often 'missing in action'

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
INQUIRER

An ABS-CBN insider told me that "Panday Book 2" may no longer push through because lead stars Jericho Rosales and Heart Evangelista are usually "missing in action." Heart's being sickly too often and Echo's non-availability has prompted some "Panday" staff to say in jest, "The hospital where Heart is confined must be somewhere in La Union." It turns out that LU is where the lovebirds frequently go surfing. Guess Panday followers have to go surfing, too. Channel surfing, that is—since it looks like their fave show's sequel will never air, huh?

Nasty

Someone close to Pauleen Luna told me that Michelle Madrigal has been sending her nasty text messages. When Michelle was confronted, she denied it. Hmm... sometimes the more you deny, the more you lie. Is this because of jealousy since the two girls happen to have the same ex-bf, JC de Vera? Or could it be out of envy, because Pauleen has more projects? A combination of jealousy and envy turns any girl into a grrrr!

Mad Bear

During an out-of-town taping of "Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita," Bearwin Meily got so mad at the production assistant when she informed him that he had to pay for his room service bill (which was not covered by the production). He reportedly shouted at the PA and told her to take care of it. When co-star Raymart Santiago heard what happened, he offered to pay, out of pity for the hapless PA. Bearwin was probably embarrassed, so he ended up paying ... against his

will. Wonder how long they can bear with Bearwin?

MTV awards

The fifth annual MTV Asia Awards will be held on May 6 at Siam Paragon, Thailand's brand new state-of-the-art entertainment complex.

Nigel Robbins, president of MTV Networks Asia-Pacific, said: "We are back again in Bangkok with Asia's premier event. MTV Asia Awards pays tribute to top musical talents in the Asia Pacific region. Thailand, with its rich cultural heritage, is the perfect place to host this event."

Viewers can cast their votes for their faves on the official website: www.mtvasiaawards.com.

My Chemical Romance, reputed for its brilliant, biting and boundary-leaping rock and roll has three nominations. The sensational James "You're Beautiful"



Heart Evangelista



Jericho Rosales

ful" Blunt is nominated in two categories. Asian stars Stefanie Sun (Singapore) and Jay Chou (Taiwan) have been nominated for the fifth consecutive year. Wang Lee Hom (Taiwan), Tata Young (Thailand), Asha Bhosle (India), Too Phat (Malaysia) are hot favorites as well. Nominees for Fave Artist from the Philippines are Bamboo, Hale, Kitchie Nadal, Orange and Lemons and Rivermaya.

This year's program is set in a mythical Asian city of the future and employs animation for the first time. Viewers and fans will be able to take part in an epic cyberpunk story of a quest for missing relics that have the power to restore good to a world gone bad.

Miss Fort Ilocandia

Miss Fort Ilocandia, considered a pathway for major beauty pageants, has produced such standouts as Anna Marie Falcon, a.k.a. Francine Prieto, who won in 2003.

Winners of this year's pageant will act as ambassador of goodwill for Fort Ilocandia Resort Hotel in Laoag City.

Pre-pageant activities will be held at the Fontana Leisure Parks, Clark Field, Pampanga on March 11. Coronation night will be at Fort Ilocandia on March 18.

New biz show

Tired of watching business shows conducted in incomprehensible jargon? RPN 9 premieres "Mangegoso Tayo" on Friday, March 3 at 6:30 a.m. Hosted by young and bubbly Mr. Fu, the program discusses business ideas, opportunities and trends.

5 RP films among world's best in '05

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
INQUIRER

Foreign critics have ranked five Filipino films among the best movies of 2005.

On the website Senses of Cinema, the titles "Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino" by Lav Diaz; "Idol," "Mondomanila: Institute of Poets" and "Ang Pamilyang Kumakain ng Lupa" by Khavn de la Cruz; and "Masahista" by Brillante Mendoza appeared in a poll participated in by respected reviewers and which included such familiar titles as "2046" by Wong Kar Wai, "Brokeback Mountain" by Ang Lee, "A History of Violence" by David Cronenberg and "The New World" by Terrence Malick.

The website prides itself in being "an online journal devoted to the serious and eclectic discussion of cinema."

The 10-hour "Ebolusyon" was chosen by three contributing critics—Ita-

APPLES' PICKINGS

Hot headed

By APPLES ABERIN SADHWANI
INQUIRER

I've always wondered why people in the metro never got into the habit of wearing headpieces such as hats, scarves and bandeaus. The scorching summer sun can practically fry an egg on the hot city pavement and yet the only time I ever see people donning fashionable hats or cute little chapeaus is when I'm in some seaside locale.

Doesn't make sense, right? Well, maybe now's the time to make things right. If only to protect your face and scalp from the sun's harmful rays, you really should start donning some type of headgear. Sure, sunblock helps, but if the ultimate goal is to delay aging, not to mention to look stylishly sharp in the process, then start wearing those wide-brimmed toppers.

Okay, okay, if that's a bit too resort-ish for your tastes, there are other ways to go about it. For instance, you can opt for a Panama hat that has a narrower brim and is therefore less attention-grabbing than the very wide-brimmed variety, other-

ly's Paolo Bertolin, Austria's Christoph Huber and Germany's Olaf Möller.

Awaited

Huber of the Vienna Cinémathèque included Lino Brocka's 1974 film "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang" in a special retrospective list of "15 Discoveries."

Bertolin, a contributor to the newspaper Il Manifesto and the magazine Cineforum, dubbed Diaz's three-hour work-in-progress, "Heremias"—which was previewed in Torino, Italy in November and is slated to premiere in Fribourg, Switzerland this month—as "the most eagerly awaited film of 2006."

Bertolin also included "Masahista" and "Idol" on his list of the year's best.

De la Cruz's two other films were chosen by Brazil's Jorge Didaco ("Mondomanila") and Thailand's Jit Phokaew ("Pamilyang Kumakain").

"It was unexpected," Mendoza said of this latest honor. "A great bonus."

De la Cruz, who first heard the news

in Rotterdam, The Netherlands in January, said this renewed interest in Pinoy films is a sign "that the country is slowly going back on the map."

Humbling

From Rotterdam, De la Cruz proceeded to Clermont Serrand, France, where he was a jury member in the laboratory/experimental section last February. He reported that a Filipino short film competed in the narrative section—Pam Miras' "Blood Bank," a Cinemalaya Best Screenplay-Short winner last year.

"It's humbling," Diaz said of the accolade. "This is good for Philippine cinema." It's more than an award, he

added, because it meant "that our country is once again being recognized as part of the discourse on world cinema."

The country's presence on the list is made all the more significant, he explained, because it acknowledged "that there is a young and dynamic movement of filmmakers in the country, who are making movies for the aesthetics, not just for entertainment."

Möller wrote in the New York-based Film Comment magazine last year that Lav's "Ebolusyon" is "a labor of love made from the passing of time and echoes reverberating faintly across history's vast plains."

Just follow your instincts and, as always, base your head-gear choices on your personality. Remember, you have to be comfortable to look and feel confident.



The joy of cooking with charcoal

By REGGIE ASPIRAS
INQUIRER

I take great pride in being Filipino. As a race, we perhaps belong to a league all of our own. Indeed, we are a highly adaptable, resilient, ingenious and brilliant breed!

Take Pinoy inventor Rizal Obligar, an engineer whose invention in 1978 should have made headline news but didn't because he was way ahead of his time.

Decades after, with the surge in power and LPG costs, people are taking notice.

I made mention of Joy Charcoal Stove many moons ago when I first saw it at the Mandarin during the Chinese New Year fete. And to this day, people have not stopped asking me about what that charcoal stove was, what the best brand is, and if it is really well worth it.

Due to the clamor of the people, I am now doing a full feature on Joy, the best stove in its class

in the country.

They have a brand-new model that is much improved. It now comes in bronze, with a pull-out ash tray for easy cleaning. Unlike other coal-fueled stoves, this one has a regulator to adjust heat from low, medium to high. It, too, has a barbecue pit option and a handle, making it so convenient to take with you anywhere, even to the beach this Holy Week!

We have three different coal stoves at home and compared to the other two, this one is the most economical: P5 worth of coal lasts an hour. So bulalo costs all of P30 to make, at six hours of cooking time and just one charcoal change! Nilagang baka at P15, with no charcoal change! Beat that?

It is also smokeless, making it worthy of a place in your kitchen! Besides, it is the only Pinoy stove that ever won international recognition!

So, is it all worth it? You bet! Call Raul and Joy Mendiola at 4542040, 0919-3775294, 0917-4674798 or 0920-8173236.

Traditional recipes

Heirloom recipes are by themselves little treasures. Through them, we keep the essence of Pinoy food and ancient family traditions alive. "Potluck" is one of those little books that give big insights into a family that takes great pride

in their heritage and their cooking traditions. A great read as well as a fantastic source of traditional recipes from bygone days (red eggs, sinanglay, tapa to kalamay hati!). For advance copies, call Anvil at 6373621 and 6375141.

Do you have a recipe for inihaw na pusit and kinilaw? Am planning to cook it for my husband's birthday.—Nenita

Wow! Inihaw and kinilaw with beer? Your husband will love you forever! Happy birthday to your hubby! Here are some of the recipes from the book "Potluck."

Seafood Kinilaw

350 g fresh white fish fillet (lapu-lapu)
150 g blanched shrimps, squid or baby octopus
1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
1/2 cucumber, peeled and cut into thin round slices
3 small tomatoes, yellow or red, halved
1 1/2 tbsp ginger, chopped fine
2 tbsp scallions
Sauce:
1 tbsp calamansi
1/4 c spiced native vinegar

1/8 c coconut milk
Salt and pepper, to taste (You get the exact quantity of salt and pepper when you buy the book! Hahaha! It's a joke!)

Cut seafood to bite-size pieces and mix with vegetables. Add sauce ingredients and mix well. Let sit at least 15 minutes before serving. Do not pre-marinate the fish, it will destroy the flavor.

Garnish with chopped pork chicharon

Mario Binaday's Inihaw na Pusit

1 kg squid, lumot, cleaned
Marinade:
1/2 c soy sauce
1/4 c brown sugar
1/2 c native vinegar
3 cloves minced garlic
1/4 tsp crushed peppercorns
2-3 pcs siling labuyo, sliced
1/4 c cooking oil (for basting)

Combine in a saucepan, bring to a boil. Cool.

Pour half the mixture to marinate squid. Reserve the rest for basting and as dipping sauce.

To the basting sauce, add 1/4 c cooking oil. Grill for seven minutes, basting with sauce.

Serve with reserve sauce for dipping.

Filipino talents stand out abroad

By NESTOR U. TORRE
INQUIRER

We recently caught the finals of the terpsichorean tilt, "So You Think You Can Dance" on ABC 5, and rooted for Fil-Am finalist Melody Lacayanga, who was narrowly beaten by top winner Nick Lazzarini.

Even if she ended up only in second place, Melody won viewers over with her technical virtuosity, great personality and love for dancing.

Melody's dancing career in the United States is now a sure thing, but she should come to the Philippines as soon as she can, to star in a TV special here.

Pinoy pride should make that show a hit, after which she should be asked to host a dance show on TV.

After Dayanara Torres left us, the local TV screen has been unsuccessfully looking for a great dancer to topbill a dance program—and Melody is it.

Another Filipino talent poised to make his mark intentionally is Mon David. He's been chosen among over 100 singers from 23 countries as one of the 12 semifinalists competing in the London International Jazz Competition for Vocalists on March 18.

Six singers will survive that leg of competition, and vie for top honors on March 22 at Cadogan Hall in Chelsea. Our hunch is that Mon will do well in the competition—so another international Filipino singing star should be born.

Finally, kudos to Fil-Am hoofer Cheryl Bautista Burke for successfully teaming up with Drew Lachey of 98 Degrees to victory in the popular "Dancing with the Stars" competition on ABC-TV in the States.

Performance factors aside, the winning pair was boosted by the many votes called in by supportive Filipinos in the US.

Melody and Cheryl should fly to Manila as soon as possible to further enhance their careers, and to enliven the desultory dance scene here.

Betrayals

Ignacio Bunye says that "Paglaban sa Kataksilan: 1017" ["Fight against Betrayal: 1017"], a documentary purporting to prove a "Left-Right" conspiracy to topple government and justifying Proclamation 1017, is now available in CD form and could be had upon request. The computer-savvy may even download it from the Malacañang website.

Well, I can at least assure him the CD will not find its way into the pirates' lairs in Quiapo and elsewhere. Even pirates have taste and draw the line at junk. As to downloading it from the government website, I think the computer-savvy would find better uses for their DSL time, which is not inexpensive. Downloading porn is a much more intelligent use of Bit Torrent.

The first time I heard the premise about the "Left-Right" conspiracy, which was one of the "whereas-es" of 1017, I thought I heard 1081 all over again. That is exactly the same premise of the Marcosian decree that put the country under martial law. Marcos then attributed the anarchy and rebelliousness in his time to a "Left-Right conspiracy," identifying the Communist Party of the Philippines and its New People's Army as constituting the first, and the "oligarchs," led by the Lopezes, as constituting the second. How they managed to bridge the class chasm to form a bond, only Ferdinand Marcos could say.

His notion, of course, elaborately spelled out in a book called "Today's Revolution: Democracy" (note the resemblance to the title: "Paglaban sa Kataksilan: 1017"), was that he was the "Center." In the same book, as a variation on the theme, he also paraded himself as the center not just of Left and Right but also of top and bottom. At the bottom, he said, were the communists who wanted to mount a bloody, "Jacobin" revolution. At the top were the oligarchs who wanted to preserve the status quo and were resisting his efforts to reform society. That notion, of course, now looks sillier than the Three Stooges. Marcos was about as centrist as George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld are today.

Books of manners

Old people often bewail the morals of young ones as if they were not young once. I often hear folks of pre-war vintage waxing nostalgic about an age ("pistaym," or peace time) when schools taught not only reading, writing and arithmetic but also "good manners and right conduct." I have yet to see the textbook or teacher's guide to this subject, but I'm sure it will be quite refreshing for me and, of course, my favorite, bratty, 2-year-old nephew who is slowly testing the patience of the adults to see how far he can go without reprimand or being asked to sit in the "quiet chair."

While some people have heard of the 19th-century Tagalog book of manners by Modesto de Castro, written in epistolary form as "Pagsusulatan ni Urbana at ni Felisa," not many are familiar with a similar Visayan work, "Lagda," by the Jesuit Pedro de Estrada, first printed in 1734. Ten years ago I came across a typescript copy in the San Beda College library and doubted its provenance, but the whole text is reproduced in Volume 5 of Gregorio Zaide's "Documentary Sources of Philippine History." Zaide also worked on a typescript English translation. Although I cannot read Visayan, I will dig up an original copy someday just to convince myself

Urban people will find the animal descriptions quite quaint, and our metrosexuals will probably object to one of the rules that state, "If you are a man, do not let your hair grow long because it is not proper for a man to knot his hair like a woman or to have it falling on his back. It is ugly to see a man who is effeminate."

Indeed, all the Arroyo administration's current effort at recycling that propaganda line reminded me of a famous slogan during martial law that said, "Sa ikaunlad ng bayan, disciplina ang kailangan" ["For the progress of the country, discipline is necessary"]. Ariel Ureta, the most famous TV personality at the time, parodied it into "Sa ikaunlad ng bayan, bisikleta ang kailangan" ["For the progress of the country, a bicycle is necessary"]. The martial law regime, which had no sense of humor, a surefire mark of fascist minds, reprimanded him harshly.

Truly, there's something to be said for the saying, "History repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce." What makes this second one farcical?

by the surveys that say the overwhelming majority of Filipinos do not believe she won the election and the majority of them want her out. Marcos could at least claim he was declaring 1081 to defend a legitimate government against a coup. Arroyo can only claim she declared 1017 to defend a coup against a legitimate effort to end it.

Second, Arroyo is the product of a "Left-Right conspiracy." That was how she came to power in the first place, or at least through a "Left-Center-Right conspiracy," also called People Power. If I recall right, broadcaster Jay Sonza produced a documentary as well about that, shortly after EDSA People Power II. I no longer recall its title, but I do recall that one of its points was that, ironically, at the time the Left-Center-Right conspiracy toppled Joseph Es-

the Left for its help in putting her in power. The honeymoon lasted briefly, the Left swiftly discovering it had just helped install a future Marcos. As "kataksilan," or betrayal, goes, Arroyo shouldn't be accusing the Left of it, the Left should be accusing Arroyo of it: "Paglaban sa Kataksilan: Rebolusyon" ["Fight against Betrayal: Revolution"].

Third, it's true: There is a Left and a Right conspiracy against Arroyo. In fact, there's a Centrist one, too. But until Arroyo declared 1017, that conspiracy could never get off the ground because the Left, Center and Right couldn't get their act together—as Arroyo's people themselves kept gleefully pointing out, though now they're singing a different tune. Almost overnight, 1017 brought them together. 1017 is the answer to a conspiracy? A conspiracy—of the Left, Right and Center, also known as People Power—is the answer to 1017! Paglaban sa Kataksilan: 1017? Paglaban sa 1017: People Power. [Fight against 1017: People Power].

That is the reason Arroyo lifted 1017 almost as soon as she declared it. That is the reason, too, she cannot afford to arrest the conspirators: there are not enough jails in this country to hold the majority of the population.

As to Arroyo being the center of Left and Right, top and bottom, well, she is about as centrist as Marcos himself.

You strangle democracy after having been elected president twice—that is tragedy. You strangle democracy after never having been elected president at all—that is farce. Paglaban sa Kataksilan: 1017?

As a footnote to this and a cautionary tale for those who think they can push their interests through Arroyo, she did acknowledge and reward the Left for its help in putting her in power. The honeymoon lasted briefly, the Left swiftly discovering it had just helped install a future Marcos. As "kataksilan," or betrayal, goes, Arroyo shouldn't be accusing the Left of it, the Left should be accusing Arroyo of it: "Paglaban sa Kataksilan: Rebolusyon" ["Fight against Betrayal: Revolution"].

Well, first off, when Marcos spoke of a conspiracy against him, he was at least the universally recognized president of the country. He had won his reelection bid, the first time a postwar Filipino president had done so. Though the 1969 election was generally regarded as the worst ever, adding new dimensions to guns, goons and gold, there was no doubt he won over Sergio Osmeña Jr. By contrast, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is speaking of a conspiracy against her when few regard her as the real president of this country. That is borne out

trada, the economy was never better. Put those two documentaries side by side and it's easy to see which one the pirates of Manila's Quiapo district would rather carry in their stalls. The Sonza documentary is far more believable when it talks of a Left, Right and Centrist conspiracy to topple not just a legitimate government but one that had an overwhelming mandate from the people.

As a footnote to this and a cautionary tale for those who think they can push their interests through Arroyo, she did acknowledge and reward

this is not another elaborate hoax like the Code of Kalantiaw.

Zaide says the original book is a guide to living a Christian life and comes complete with prayers and other devotional material. But what should interest historians are the words of advice given in the 18th century that don't quite match our code of conduct in the 21st century. The opening chapter alone reflects how different our world is from theirs:

"When you wake up in the morning, do not roll on yourself like an earthworm, do not wiggle like a snake that is crawling on the ground, but get up right away, make the Sign of the Cross and thank God that He has saved you from the danger that night."

"Fold your blanket, roll your pillow in your mat, and put them aside or in a corner so that they will not bother or disturb."

"Change your dress so that you will not appear as if you have just come out of a pigsty, and at the same time pray the Act of Faith. Your dress, even if it is old or torn, should be smooth and clean because it is not proper that you should appear before other people scrubbing yourself as if you had lice."

You should wash your face so that you will not look dirty or smell as if you have just come out from bed."

Urban people will find the animal descriptions quite quaint, and our metrosexuals will probably object to one of the rules that state, "If you are a man, do not let your hair grow long because it is not proper for a man to knot his hair like a woman or to have it falling on his back. It is ugly to see a man who is effeminate."

It was perhaps beyond his comprehension to see women with a shaved head, masculine women, or even men with earrings—not to mention navel, nipple and penis rings.

Then there is a question of good taste or restraint in design. Manila Mayor Lito Atienza's loud Hawaiian shirts would have been frowned upon in the 18th century, for "Lagda" dictates: "It is good that your dress should be like a flower, but remember that too many ornaments will make you look like a blooming 'gumamela' [hibiscus]. Therefore you should be moderate and should be in harmony with others."

Some rules do not change: "Do not let your nails grow long like the nails of a hawk. Do not blow your nose with your dress, and do not wipe your mucus with your hands, with your sleeves,



Looking Back
By AMBETH OCAMPO
INQUIRER

your pants or your skirts, and that is why you should carry a piece of cloth or a handkerchief. Do not spit too much, and when you do so, do not face the wind so that you will not spray your saliva on others."

Even posture and manner of walking are not spared: "Walk sedately, your body neither very stiff and erect nor your hips swaying -- do not sway yourself like a banana leaf. Do not walk with mincing steps as if treading on glowing embers; do not walk too slow like a worm. Neither walk on the tips of your toes nor drag your feet as if they were legs being hauled along. Do not swing your arms but put your hand beneath your cloth; if you cannot do this, fold them on your breast."

"Your head should be neither bowed nor held high like that of a chicken when drinking; do not look up at the windows of houses as if you were searching for bees; do not bend your head to one side or another as if a glowworm has entered it; do not open your eyes wide to look around or keep turning your head like a weather cock."

There is simply so much that would be out of date today, thus "Lagda" is read as history and helps us appreciate the world we live in at present.

History is often mistaken to be a look into the past for its own sake. But history only becomes relevant when we see ourselves in relation to the past.

What is it this thing we call "good manners"? In relation to what?

Books of manners are historical documents that tell us what life was like then, and when we compare this to manners in our time we gain perspective, which is a gift much needed in these noisy times.

SAMU'T SARI

Macalintal reigns supreme in bartending tilt

March 4 was a victorious night for Fiesta Resort & Spa's resident bartender, Raymond Macalintal, who once again reigned supreme behind the bar during the Bartenders Cocktail Competition dubbed "Sauza Tequila Challenge."

Macalintal's concoction, called "Green Revolution," also bagged the Best in Taste plum, tied with Marianas Resort's Alain Basco. Macalintal also won the showmanship award.

Third place went to Pacific Islands Club's Jess Acuavera, while the only female participant, Dayann De Leon of Aqua Resort Club, won second place in the event. First place went to Tang's Bar's bartender, Ed Flores.

Other participants in the competition were Mauro Sabate Jr. of Fiesta Resort Hotel, Charlton Lipa of Aqua

Resort Club, and Marvin Salamat of Pacific Island Club. Individual participants were Ramil Estaquio and Joseph Solmarin.

Judges for the overall contest were Johnny's Bar and Grill owner Koji Takeda, KZMI sales manager Bob Webb, Hard Rock Cafe operations manager Tufer Sendon, and UFO president and RP Enterprises owner Roland Pamintuan. The judges for Best in Taste included Chito Cristobal, bar manager of Ocean Side Dinner, and Ed Manano, bar manager Manic Inn Bar and Boutique.

This year's NMBA Bartenders' Competition 10 participants hold up their certificates of appreciation in a souvenir shot with the Northern Marianas Bartenders Association officers and guests.



MARCONI CALINDAS



Winners pose for victory photo: 3rd runner up Jess Acuavera, Champion Raymond Macalintal, 1st runner up Ed Flores and 2nd runner Dayann De Leon.



"Sauza Tequila Challenge" winner Raymond Macalintal poses with, from left, Ted Malaran, NMBA president Lito Espina, Ramon Awit, and Boy Ching.

MARCONI CALINDAS



Second runner up and only female participant Dayann De Leon poses with friends at the end of the awarding ceremony.



Different Filipino organizations in the CNMI such as Bayani Association, CNMI Power and Samahang Laguna, among many others, pose for a souvenir photo during the Northern Marianas Bartenders Association's Sauza Tequila Challenge last March 4 at the Aqua Resort Club.



From left, Tom Alegre of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Manny Barcial of Aqua Resort Club, and musician Philip Garcia of Aqua Resort Club pose for the Saipan Tribune during the competition.

MARCONI CALINDAS